

IN THE SPECIFICATION

Please amend Paragraph 32 of the specification as set forth below:

[0032] Fig. 8 illustrates a cross section of the hybrid riser tower 13. This illustration depicts the various common components of a hybrid riser tower: ~~umbilical~~ umbilicals 81, foam insulation 82, production risers 83, injection ~~riser~~ risers 85, and the carrier pipe structural member 84. In order to increase the design tension limit of the hybrid riser tower, an alternative embodiment of the invention incorporates a strengthened carrier pipe structural member 84 designed to provide a higher tensile strength. In this embodiment, the carrier pipe structural member 84 can be designed to provide a portion of the maximum buoyancy force of the variable buoyancy device 12. This portion can be a fraction of the maximum buoyancy force or it can exceed the maximum buoyancy force depending upon embodiment specific design considerations. The additional tensile strength of the carrier pipe structural member 84 provides a greater safety margin during the installation of the SCR(s), especially during the deballasting of the variable buoyancy device.